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Question of Palestine

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Fifty-sixth year

Letter dated 13 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a statement adopted by the Council of Ministers of the United Arab Emirates at its meeting held on 12 March 2001 under the chairmanship of His Highness Sheikh Sultan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister. The text affirms the well-established positions of the United Arab Emirates on the question of Palestine, the situation in the Middle East and developments in the peace process as well as its position with regard to the recent remarks of Mr. Colin L. Powell, United States Secretary of State, to the effect that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and that the United States Administration should move its embassy to the city.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 40 and 41, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammad J. **Sanıhan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 13 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement adopted by the Council of Ministers of the United Arab Emirates on 12 March 2001 concerning the remarks made by the Secretary of State of the United States of America on the issue of Jerusalem

The Council of Ministers of the United Arab Emirates takes exception to the remarks that have been made by Mr. Colin L. Powell, United States Secretary of State, to the effect that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and that the United States should move its embassy to the city.

The Council of Ministers considers these statements to be in flagrant violation of the United Nations and other resolutions determining that Jerusalem is part of the Arab territories that were occupied in June 1967 and that the same considerations apply to it as to all the other occupied Palestinian territories.

The Council of Ministers of the United Arab Emirates expresses its strong indignation at and categorical rejection of these statements as representing a manifest and blatant alignment with aggression and occupation and an abandonment of the United States role in the peace process in the Middle East and of impartiality and fairness.

The Council of Ministers of the United Arab Emirates is of the view that the position enunciated by the United States Secretary of State before Congress may compound the dangers confronting the region owing to the ongoing Israeli aggression and the unjust blockade that has been maintained against the fraternal Palestinian people for more than five months and that it will indeed have dire consequences, in particular for stability in the region and for relations between the United States and the Arab and Islamic countries.

The Council of Ministers therefore urges the United States of America to handle the issue of Jerusalem in a responsible and impartial manner, not only because of the city's central importance and sanctity for Muslims and Christians but also because the international community has taken the position of rejecting the occupation under which the Holy City has languished since June 1967. It has affirmed this position in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the other Security Council and General Assembly resolutions stressing that the occupation is unlawful and that all of the measures to which it has given rise are null and void, as stated in particular in Security Council resolution 478 (1980).

The Council of Ministers takes this opportunity to renew the resolute support of the United Arab Emirates for Arab and Islamic rights in the Holy City and to state that it is essential to redeem the city from occupation so that it may serve as the capital of the independent State of Palestine.